

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 00642 062007Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9963

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

S E C R E T USNATO 0642

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, GR

SUBJECT: US BASES AND MILITARY FACILITIES IN GREECE

STATE PLEASE PASS TO SECDEF

REF: (A) STATE 022598; (B) ATHENS 933

1. MISSION APPRECIATES DEPARTMENT'S THOUGHTFUL MESSAGE (REF A) ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN US/GREEK BILATERAL TALKS AND DISCUSSIONS WHICH GREECE PLANS TO HOLD WITH OTHER NATO ALLIES CONCERNING ITS TIES TO NATO, AND WE HAVE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THE THREE POSSIBLE PROCEDURAL DEVICES SUGGESTED FOR DEALING WITH THIS RELATIONSHIP, IN LIGHT OF EMBASSY ATHENS COMMENTS (REF B). IN BRIEF, WE RECOMMEND ESTABLISHMENT OF MORE FORMAL "GROUP OF THIRTEEN" (DEPARTMENT'S THIRD OPTION) AS PRIMARY FORUM, BOTH FOR KEEPING OTHER NATO ALLIES APPRISED OF US/GREEK BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS AND FOR CONDUCT OF GREEK/NATO NEGOTIATIONS. AT SAME TIME, WE FORESEE NEED FOR PERIODIC MEETINGS OF AN INFORMAL GROUP (DEPARTMENT'S SECOND OPTION).

2. NEED TO INVOLVE ALL DPC ALLIES: THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE HAS OFFICIALLY RAISED WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL ITS READINESS TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS ON GREEK WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NATO INTEGRATED MILITARY STRUCTURE. THE SYG MUST NATURALLY TAKE THE LEAD IN THIS MATTER WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. THIS IS A MATTER WHICH INVOLVES ALL OF THE ALLIES--TO A GREATER OR LESSER EXTENT--THAT COMPRISE
SECRET

PAGE 02 NATO 00642 062007Z

NATO'S MILITARY STRUCTURE. FURTHERMORE, IF MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATION IS TO BE KEPT IN TANDEM WITH BILATERAL US/GREEK REVIEW OF SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS, ALL ALLIES MUST BE BROUGHT TO FEEL THEY ARE FULLY AND EQUALLY APPRISED OF DIRECTION IN WHICH THAT TANDEM IS BEING

STEERED. FOR THESE REASONS, MISSION GENERALLY FAVORS THE APPROACH CONTAINED IN ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PRIMARY FORUM FOR DISCUSSIONS OF BOTH NEGOTIATIONS. AS NOTED, IN THIS APPROACH WE HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF FOLLOWING THE PRECEDENT ESTABLISHED AT THE TIME OF FRANCE'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE INTEGRATED MILITARY STRUCTURE.

3. WE WOULD FORESEE THIS AD HOC GROUP OF THIRTEEN (LESS FRANCE AND GREECE, BUT INCLUDING TURKEY) MEETING PRIVATELY AT THE CALL OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS WHICH THE SECRETARY GENERAL BELIEVES MUST BE ADDRESSED BY THE ALLIES AS A WHOLE.

4. WE WOULD ENVISAGE THIS AD HOC GROUP OF THIRTEEN RESPONDING TO GREEK INITIATIVES AFFECTING GREEK RELATIONSHIP TO THE ALLIANCE, RATHER THAN A GROUP TO INITIATE ACTIONS WITH REGARD TO THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL. SHOULD THE GROUP OF THIRTEEN AGREE THAT CERTAIN GREEK/NATO MATTERS REQUIRED MORE FORMAL NATO-WIDE ACTION OR ATTENTION, THESE COULD BE PLACED ON THE DPC AGENDA FOR CONSIDERATION.

5. CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTS IN US/GREEK RELATIONS, THE US AND GREEK AMBASSADORS WOULD FIRST INFORM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, AS CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF THIRTEEN, AND SEEK HIS VIEWS ON WHEN AND WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD BE SHARED WITH THE ALLIES IN THE GROUP OF THIRTEEN. AS APPROPRIATE, THE THIRTEEN COULD BE INFORMED BY THE SYG OR JOINTLY BY THE US AND GREEK PERMREPS. THIS PROCEDURE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A FEELING AMONG THE ALLIES THAT THE SYG ENJOYS THE CONFIDENCE OF THE US AND IS ACTING IN AN AUTHORITATIVE AND RESPONSIVE MANNER.

6. ALSO AN INFORMAL GROUP: IN ADDITION TO THE MORE FORMAL FORUM OUTLINED ABOVE, MISSION RECOMMENDS ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INFORMAL GROUP OF KEY ALLIES. WE WOULD FORESEE THIS INFORMAL GROUP MEETING INFREQUENTLY ONCE THEY HAD GOTTEN TOGETHER TO CLARIFY THEIR ROLE, AND EXISTING PRIMARILY AS A RESOURCE FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

(A) TO COUNSEL THE SYG ON HIS IMPORTANT ROLE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS;

(B) TO ACT AS A STEERING GROUP, PARTICULARLY FOR CONSULTATIONS
SECRET

PAGE 03 NATO 00642 062007Z

ON TIMING AND AGENDA OF MEETINGS OF THE GROUP OF THIRTEEN;

(C) TO SERVE AS A BUFFER SHOULD TURKEY CHOOSE TO FOLLOW AN UNCOOPERATIVE AND HARD LINE IN MEETINGS OF THE LARGER GROUP;

(D) TO MEET WITH THE GREEKS ON PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE MATTERS THEY WILL NOT DISCUSS IN TURKISH PRESENCE.

7. MISSION BELIEVES THIS COMBINATION OF PROCEDURES WOULD BEST SERVE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL OUR ALLIES AND AVOID, TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, DEVELOPMENT OF AN ADVERSARY ATMOSPHERE IN GREECE'S RELATION WITH ITS NATO ALLIES. SYG LUNS HAS INDICATED HIS FULL AGREEMENT WITH THE US GO-SLOW APPROACH TO DEALING WITH GREEK/NATO

RELATIONS AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO FULLY CONSULT WITH US. WE BELIEVE WE CAN COUNT ON HIM TO GUIDE THE DISCUSSIONS IN THOSE VARIOUS FORA IN A MANNER WHICH MINIMIZES THE RISK OF PLACING GREECE ON THE DEFENSIVE OR IN AN ADVERSARY ROLE. SIMILARLY, WE BELIEVE ONE CAN DEPEND ON LUNS TO DO WHAT MAY BE NECESSARY TO INSURE THAT NATO IS, NATO MILITARY AND NATO ALLIES DO NOT TAKE MEASURES WHICH WOULD FORCE THE PACE OF US/GREEK BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS OR INITIATE ACTIONS THAT COULD ADVERSELY EFFECT THE COURSE OF US/GREEK NEGOTIATIONS.

8. WE HAVE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED EMBASSY ATHENS' VIEWS (REF B). WE, TOO, RECOGNIZE THE DRAWBACKS TO HAVING THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY PARTICIPATE IN NATO DELIBERATIONS ON THE GREEK WITHDRAWAL ISSUE. HOWEVER, TURKEY IS A FULL MEMBER OF THE ALLIANCE AND THERE ARE NO GROUNDS FOR THE EXCLUSION OF TURKEY FROM NATO CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS SO DIRECTLY AFFECTING TURKEY'S VITAL INTERESTS. FURTHERMORE, IT WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE IF NOT FRUITLESS TO REACH DECISIONS THEY DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN AND SUPPORT. IN MEETINGS OF THE THIRTEEN, IT IS LIKELY THAT THE TURKS WILL BE GENERALLY ISOLATED IF THEY PURSUE A HARD LINE. FURTHERMORE. SUCH MEETINGS WOULD PROVIDE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR OTHER ALLIES TO APPLY COUNTER-PRESSURE TO THE TURKS. AS SUGGESTED ABOVE, THE SMALL GROUP CAN BE CONVENED IF TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS WARRANT.

9. WE BELIEVE WHATEVER COURSE WASHINGTON DECIDES TO PURSUE THAT IT WOULD BE WISE TO GET SYG LUNS' INFORMAL REACTION FIRST BEFORE US MAKES AN OFFICIAL PROPOSAL TO HIM OR RAISES THE MATTER BILATERALLY WITH THE GREEKS. IN APPROACHING LUNS, WE WOULD ALSO
SECRET

PAGE 04 NATO 00642 062007Z

WANT TO SEEK HIS ASSURANCES THAT HE COULD MONITOR THE MILITARY OMponents OF NATO TO GUARD AGAINST ACTIONS IN THEIR CHANNELS WHICH MIGHT PROVE TROUBLESOME.
BRUCE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECDEF.

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